

**MOST IMMEDIATE**  
**BY FAX/UMS**

No. F. 7(3)/2012-Cord  
**ELECTION COMMISSION OF PAKISTAN**



**SECRETARIAT,**  
**Constitution Avenue G-5/2,**  
Islamabad, the 12<sup>th</sup> March, 2013

- To (1) The Provincial Election Commissioner,  
Punjab, Lahore.
- (2) The Provincial Election Commissioner,  
Sindh, Karachi.
- (3) The Provincial Election Commissioner,  
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Peshawar.
- (4) The Provincial Election Commissioner,  
Balochistan, Quetta.

Subject: **PREPARATION OF POLLING SCHEME FOR GENERAL ELECTIONS- 2013.**

Dear Sir,

I am directed to invite your attention to Sections 8 and 9 of the Representation of the People Act, 1976, which provide that Returning Officers shall prepare list of Polling Stations and appoint Presiding Officers and other staff for polling stations.

2. You are, therefore, requested that draft Polling Scheme (List of Polling Stations and List of Polling Personnel) for General Elections, 2013, may kindly be prepared in accordance with the relevant provisions of the law and the following Guidelines:

**LIST OF POLLING STATIONS**

- (1) On receipt of draft lists of polling stations from the District Election Commissioners, each Returning Officer will physically verify each and
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every polling station in the constituency or constituencies of his jurisdiction and may make such alterations in that list as he may deem necessary and publish the same within a period of fifteen days inviting objections from the voters of that constituency to be filed with the District Returning Officer within a period of ten days of the publication of draft list.

- (2) The District Returning Officer after due notice to the objector and after making such inquiry as he may deem fit shall decide such objections within a period of seven days.
- (3) A final list of polling stations specifying the electoral area, the electors whereof will be entitled to vote shall be published in the official Gazette by the DRO at least fifteen days before the polling day after making necessary changes therein in the light of decisions made by him on the objections.
- (4) The Returning Officer shall establish in each constituency polling stations according to the final list published in the official gazette by the District Returning Officer.
- (5) As far as possible the polling stations may not be at the distance of more than two kilometers from the residence of the voters entitled to cast their vote at that polling station.
- (6) The lists of polling stations shall be prepared constituency-wise.
- (7) The Polling Stations may cater for upto 2000 voters but they should not normally exceed 2500 voters.
- (8) If there are 2500 voters in a village, only one Polling Station with 3 or 4 booths may be established.
- (9) If there are more than 200/300 voters in any remote area/village and they are 10-15 k.m. away from the main Polling Station, then a new Polling Station shall be established for the convenience of voters.
- (10) The number of Polling Booths may be determined keeping in view the number of voters assigned to a polling station, e.g., one, two, three. The number of booths shall not exceed four.
- (11) **While preparing list of Polling Stations, the convenience of voters and suitability of buildings may be kept in view. In any case it should be easily accessible to the voters.**

- (12) The Polling Stations may be set up only in Government owned buildings such as Schools, Colleges, Offices, Community Centers, Union Council Offices etc. The buildings of Autonomous Bodies, Semi-Autonomous Bodies and Corporations can also be utilized for the purpose.
- (13) In Urban Areas, separate Polling Stations for female voters shall be proposed only if male Polling Stations and female polling stations cannot be accommodated in one and the same building. If it is not possible then combined polling stations may be suggested with exclusive polling booths for female voters manned by female polling staff.
- (14) The selection of buildings of the Polling Stations may be made with utmost care. Where more than one building are available, the spacious and centrally located building should be selected as a Polling Station keeping in view convenience of voters.
- (15) It may be ensured that no electoral area is left out and the proposed Polling Stations are within the extent of each constituency as finally notified by the Election Commission.
- (16) No polling station would be housed in a building, which is owned by or is in possession of any individual. It would be illegal to locate the Polling Station in a building, which is owned by or is under the influence of a prospective candidate. The polling station building would be such as is acceptable to all the candidates. In no case would a police station building be utilized for this purpose.
- (17) The public buildings should not be in a dilapidated condition or in a state of disrepair. Wherever new buildings have sprung up, they would be utilized, if found suitable.
- (18) In case the Polling Station building has more than one story, the Polling Station should preferably be located on the ground floor to avoid inconvenience to the voters.
- (19) In making arrangements for a combined Polling Station, it has to be ensured that female voters of a particular electoral area are assigned to the same Polling Station to which their men-folk have been assigned, but separate female and male entrances and separate booths for male and female voters should be arranged.
- (20) In the selection of buildings, the tribal affiliations and tribal feuds have to be kept in view so that voters of a tribe have not to go to the territory of a tribe hostile to them. The over-looking of this factor can create a law and order situation. It can also lead to disenfranchisement of a particular section of voters.

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- (21) Provision of more than one booth in a room of ordinary size has to be avoided. In unavoidable circumstances, however, the room should be partitioned to provide separate booths for male and female voters.
- (22) Improvisation of Polling Stations has to be avoided in the interest of economy. Improvised polling stations would be set-up under unavoidable circumstances only and those too at places where absolutely no public buildings are available.

3. In addition to above, the contents of the paragraphs 81(e) of the Judgment dated 08.06.2012 passed by the Hon'ble Supreme Court in Constitution Petition No.87 of 2011 (Workers Party Pakistan and others Vs Federation of Pakistan and two others) reproduced below, shall also be kept in view, while preparing the polling scheme:

**“(e) To facilitate the voters, the numbers of Polling Stations may be increased appropriately throughout the country so that the Polling Stations are not at a distance of more than two Kilometers from the residence of voters. X X X X X X X X  
X X X X X X X”**

The above direction of the Apex court will be implemented in letter and spirit where its implementation is practically and to ensure its maximum implementation improvised polling station may be established.

**LIST OF POLLING PERSONNEL**

- (1) Utmost care should be exercised in the selection of polling staff. There will be a Presiding Officer for each polling station, and Two Assistant Presiding Officer and a Polling Officer for each booth at a Polling Station.
- (2) As far as possible, the Presiding Officer be appointed from amongst the officers of the Federal Government.
- (3) Female polling staff may be selected for exclusive female Polling Stations as well as female Polling Booths at combined Polling Stations. In case of rural areas where female staff is not available, the booth may be manned by some elderly male member with at

least one female Polling Officer or Assistant Presiding Officer at each booth, meant for female voters.

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- (4) **Where a female Presiding Officer has been appointed for a Polling Station, a Naib Quasid will also be deputed with her to facilitate taking over of election material, carrying of ballot boxes and other similar jobs.**
  - (5) The Presiding Officers should be in BPS-17 and above and they should be able to command respect and inspire public confidence.
  - (6) The Assistant Presiding Officers may be drawn from amongst officials working in BPS-11 and above. The Assistant Presiding Officer shall take over the functions of Presiding Officer, if required.
  - (7) The Polling Officers should be the officials working in BPS-5 and above.
  - (8) Such officers as are likely to retire by the time Elections are held or likely to go abroad, should not be included in the list of Polling Personnel.
  - (9) The Polling Personnel should be men of integrity and should be drawn from the Departments of Federal and Provincial Governments, Autonomous Bodies, Semi-Autonomous Bodies and Corporations.
  - (10) **5% reserve polling staff should be earmarked for each category in the constituency.**
  - (11) It is advisable to issue appointment orders of the polling staff sufficiently in advance of the date of the poll in order to avoid any delay in the matter.
4. It is therefore, requested that necessary instructions may be issued to all the District Returning Officers, Returning Officers and other concerned for compliance under intimation to this Commission.

Yours faithfully,

**(Syed Sher Afgan)**  
Director General  
(Elections)



